

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 8025

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINT, AR

SUBJECT: SANCTIONS AGAINST FRASER COMMITTEE WITNESSES

REF: (A) STATE 298737, (B) BUENOS AIRES 7975

1. REFTEL B WITH REPORT ON INDICTMENT OF FRASER COMMITTEE WITNESSES
ROCA AND GARZON MACEDA CROSSED INQUIRY IN REFTEL A.

2. AT LUNCH WITH SECRETARY OF PRESIDENCY GENERAL VILLARREAL AND
MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF ON DEC. 9, VISITING DEPT ASST SEC BRAY ASKED
IF HE COULD ASSURE FRASER COMMITTEE THAT OTHER ARGENTINE NATIONALS
INVITED TO TESTIFY BEFORE COMMITTEE WOULD NOT SUFFER SIMILAR GOA
SANCTIONS. VILLARREAL STATED FLATLY THAT ONLY ACT OF PROPOSING OR
RECOMMENDING SANCTIONS AGAINST ARGENTINA BY ARGENTINE NATIONAL WAS
PROHIBITED BY LAW, AND THAT TESTIMONY ALONE OR EVEN CRITICISM OF GOA
WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE SANCTIONED. PRESIDENCY STAFF RECALLED THAT
SINCE COUP TWO OFFICIALS OF SOCIALIST PARTY HAD ATTENDED SOCIALIST
INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN GENEVA AND HAD JOINED IN STATEMENT WHICH
CRITICIZED GOA WITHOUT CALLING FOR SANCTIONS, AND ALSO TOOK NOTE OF
LEFTIST TERRORISM. THIS ACT WAS OF NO CONCERN TO GOA, AND SOCIALIST
LEADERS WERE WELCOME BACK IN ARGENTINA. ON OTHER HAND, THEY RECALLED
IN 1966 A STEVEDORES' LEADER IN THE PORT OF BUENOS AIRES HAD CALLED
FOR A BOYCOTT OF ARGENTINA BY SIMILAR UNIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES,
AND HAD BEEN TRIED UNDER THE LAW. THEY DID NOT RECALL ANOTHER
INSTANCE, BUT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN A FEW OTHERS. VILLARREAL RE-
STATED GOA CONCERN OVER ROLE AS COMMITTEE WITNESSES OF SUCH WELL-
KNOWN REPRESENTATIVES OF TERRORIST GROUPS AS ROCA AND GARZON
MACEDA.

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3. AT A MEETING WITH MINISTER OF INTERIOR HARGUINDEGUY LATER THE SAME AFTERNOON, BRAY RAISED THE QUESTION OF POSSIBLE PROSECUTION OF WITNESSES BEFORE THE FRAZER SUB-COMMITTEE AND ASKED IF THE MRCISTER COULD ASSURE HIM THAT ANY FUTURE WITNESSES WOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO PROSECUTION, EVEN THOUGH THEY MIGHT BE CRITICAL OF THE GOA'S POLICIES AND PRACTICES. HARGUINDEGUY GAVE ASSURANCES THAT WITNESSES WOULD NOT BE PROSECUTED, QUALIFYING THESE ASSURANCES ONLY WITH THE PROVISIO THAT WITNESSES WOULD FACE PROSECUTION IF THEY PROPOSED SANCTIONS AGAINST ARGENTINA. MIN. HARGUINDEGUY STATED HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT ARGENTINA HAD LITTLE TO LOSE AND MUCH TO GAIN IF RESPONSIBLE ARGENTINES WOULD APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE. HE ADDED THAT WHILE HE KNEW NOTHING OF U.S. LAWS, HE ASSUMED THAT THERE WERE PEACETIME PENALTIES FOR U.S. CITIZENS WHO AIDED FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE U.S., SO HE ASSUMED THAT THE ARGENTINE LEGISLATON WAS NOT WITHOUT PARALLEL ELSEWHERE.
HTPSLG

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